

Excel poses file name problem; man seeks and finds answers

By [Crabby](#)

on April 18

Today's post is a little more...*technical* than I'm used to doing and I must say, right up front, that *I did not come up with the answer on my own*. Nope. Keep reading.

A reader named Tim from New York had an issue that, while wasn't a work stoppage issue, exactly, was driving him nuts nonetheless.

The problem

Tim, using Windows 7 and Office 2010, was used to working with (juggling, I'd say) many, many Excel spreadsheets open at once, and he wrote to me to tell me that when hovering over an Excel icon in the task bar, all Office 2010 programs with open files show the program icon only and then the file name. HOWEVER, he explained, Excel shows the icon AND "Microsoft Excel" AND the file name. For Tim this was an issue because he had so many files open that he was unable to see the names of all them from the task bar. He was seeing it like this (x100 because of all the files he had open):



Now, I tried it and was unable to reproduce this issue. When I opened several spreadsheets, all I saw was the Excel icon and the name of the spreadsheets (taking up WAY less room than Tim). Like this:



The answer

So here's the thing (and I found this out from a very helpful person who goes by the name "Pollardie" at [Microsoft Answers](#)): Tim had been opening a new instance of Excel for every spreadsheet instead of opening his many spreadsheets from *within* Excel, like I was doing. Pollardie explained that, telling Tim he should open his spreadsheets from within *one* instance of Excel if he wanted the program name to disappear vamoose, scam, disappear.

Problem solved? Well, yes and no. Technically, *yes*, but Tim wanted to open his spreadsheets any way in which he pleased, thank you (hey, a man has his reasons) and so for him, no, that didn't answer the question. And so he pursued it on Microsoft Answers, and both Tim AND Pollardie came up with a lovely solution.

You don't like the answer? Special workaround

Pollardie offered this bit of coding:

1. Open the VBE by pressing **Alt + F11**. (VBE is Visual Basic Editor, which is a tool that lets you create or change certain procedures from within any Office program. This is what Tim wanted to do: change the way Excel was set up to behave.)
2. Open the immediate window (**Ctrl + G**) and copy this into the pane that opens and press **Enter**:

Code: Application.Caption = ActiveWorkbook.FullName

Yep, that worked. However, Tim wanted this code executed automatically, each time he used Excel. And he found a way. Here, [see for yourself](#).

I want to thank Tim for taking the time to write me and to follow up with Microsoft Answers. I also want to thank that masked crusader at Microsoft Answers, Pollardie, whoever and wherever you are...

Moral of the story: If you don't ask, you don't get an answer.

— *Crabby*